Birmingham City Commission Minutes December 18, 2023 Municipal Building, 151 Martin 7:30 p.m.

Vimeo Link: https://vimeo.com/895978107

I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Elaine McLain, Mayor, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Bingham called the roll.

Present: Mayor McLain

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host Commissioner Long Commissioner Longe

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Ecker; City Clerk Bingham, Assistant City Engineer Borton, Assistant City Manager Clemence, Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, Communications Director Gamboa, Finance Director Gerber, Police Chief Grewe, City Attorney Kucharek, Parks and Recreation Manager Laird, Department of Public Services Director Zielinski

III. PROCLAMATIONS, CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS, ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS, INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Appointments

12-285-23 Board of Review

The Commission interviewed Guy DiPlacido for the appointment.

MOTION: Nomination by Commissioner Longe:

To appoint Guy DiPlacido to the Board of Review as a regular member to serve a three-year term to expire December 31, 2026.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

12-286-23 Board of Ethics

The Commission interviewed Judy Doyle for the appointment.

MOTION: Nomination by Commissioner Baller:

To appoint Judy Doyle as an alternate member to the Board of Ethics to serve a three-year term to expire June 30, 2026.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

12-287-23 Multi-Modal Transportation Board

The Commission interviewed Z. Rosie Koul for the appointment.

MOTION: Nomination by Commissioner Baller:

To appoint Z. Rosie Koul as a regular member to the Multi-Modal Transportation Board to serve the remainder of a three-year term to expire March 24, 2025.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

CC Bingham swore in the appointees.

IV. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

V. CONSENT AGENDA

12-288-23 Consent Agenda

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Baller, seconded by Commissioner Longe:

To move the Consent Agenda with the exception of Items D, I, and J.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Host Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig

Nays, None

- A. Resolution to approve the City Commission meeting minutes of November 27, 2023.
- B. Resolution to approve the City Commission Workshop meeting minutes of December 4, 2023.
- C. Resolution to approve the City Commission meeting minutes of December 4, 2023.
- E. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated December 14, 2023 in the amount of \$1,662,667.77.
- F. Resolution to amend the Schedule of Fees, Charges, Bonds and Insurance as presented and to adopt the revised Public Records Policy, effective January 1, 2024.
- G. Resolution to set a public hearing date of January 22, 2024 to consider the Special Land Use Permit, Final Site Plan and Design Review application for 34350 Woodward Ave & 909-911 Haynes Street Fred Lavery Porsche.
- H. Resolution to set a public hearing date of January 22, 2024 to consider the lot combination of 34350 Woodward Ave and 909-911 Haynes Street, Fred Lavery Porsche, parcel # 19-36-281-022 and parcel # 19-36-281-030.
- K. Motion to adopt an ordinance amendment to Chapter 114, Utilities, Article II.-Water Supply Systems, Division 3.-Fire Protection, Sec. 114-93 to prohibit the obstruction of fire lanes and fire hydrants and add that a violation of this section will result in a civil infraction with a \$500 fine.

12-289-23 Warrant List Dated 12/07/2023 (Item D)

The Mayor noted a payment for \$100 made to the 48th District Court.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Longe, seconded by Commissioner Baller: To approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated December 7, 2023 in the amount of \$1,661,581.50.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Host Commissioner Longe Commissioner Haig MPT Schafer Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller

Nays, None

12-290-23 Edgewood Road Project #6-24 (S) Set Public Hearing Dates for Hearing of Necessity and Confirmation of the Roll for Water and Sewer Laterals Special Assessment District (S.A.D.) (Item I)

Commissioner Baller recommended that all projects be planned based on the City's newer evaluation criteria. Since this project was planned based on prior criteria, he recommended that this project not be advanced.

Commissioner Long advocated for the project, noting that the redundancy in the water lines would be beneficial and that the opportunity to add a retention pond in St. James Park would also be beneficial.

Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

It was noted that the most appropriate time to discuss the necessity of this project would be at the hearing of necessity, so that the public would have an opportunity to participate.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Baller, seconded by Commissioner Host: To set the Public Hearing of Necessity for the replacement and improvement of water and sewer laterals meeting the requirements for assessment for all properties within the project area on Edgewood Road between Lincoln and E. Southlawn on Monday, January 8, 2024, at 7:30 P.M.;

If necessity is determined on January 8, 2024, to meet on Monday, January 22, 2024, at 7:30 P.M., for the purpose of conducting the public hearing to confirm the Assessment of the Roll for the replacement and improvement of water and sewer laterals meeting the requirements for assessment, for all properties within the project area on Edgewood Road between Lincoln and E. Southlawn.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Host Commissioner Longe Commissioner Haig

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller

Nays, None

12-291-23 Clarification to Recently Amended Ordinance Chapter 114, Utilities,

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Sec. 93 Obstructing Hydrants/Fire Lanes (Item J)

Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Haig clarified that he wanted to make sure that evidence of a violation would be provided for protection of the City's interests.

He was advised that photographs of this type of violation would be taken as evidence.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Haig, seconded by Commissioner Longe: To adopt an ordinance amendment to Chapter 114, Utilities, Article II.-Water Supply Systems, Division 3.-Fire Protection, Sec. 114-93 to prohibit the obstruction of fire lanes and fire hydrants and add that a violation of this section will result in a civil infraction with a \$500 fine.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Host Commissioner Longe Commissioner Haig

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller

Nays, None

VI. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

CM Ecker presented the report and added that Toys for Tots was collecting new, unwrapped toys for children through December 21, 2023 at the Fire Department and at City Hall.

Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Baller commended the City and PC Grewe for their leadership regarding Woodward noise concerns.

The Mayor explained that aspects of the Woodward noise remediation process were still being negotiated at the State Legislative level. The Mayor encouraged residents to contact State Senator McMorrow via the Senator's website to share concerns regarding noise on Woodward.

Commissioner Host commended Staff on the welcome packets for new residents and encouraged the City to coordinate with the Birmingham newcomers group to welcome new residents.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

12-292-23 Public Hearing for 377 Hamilton Row — Birmingham Sushi Cafe —
Special Land Use Permit, Final Site Plan & Design Review PH — 377
Hamilton Row — Bham Sushi SLUP

5 December 18, 2023

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 8:28 p.m.

PD Dupuis presented the item. Chris Tower, attorney, spoke on behalf of the applicant.

Seeing no public comment, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 8:33 p.m.

Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners made the following comments in the course of discussion:

 When changes are made to an establishment, the establishment should also be required to come into compliance with all present ordinances.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Baller, seconded by Commissioner Host:

To approve the Special Land Use Permit, Final Site Plan and Design Review application for 377 Hamilton Row – Birmingham Sushi Cafe.

AND

To authorize the City Clerk to complete the Local Approval Notice at the request of Kim Fam Birmingham Sushi, Inc., and to approve the transfer of the Class C Liquor License from D&D Hospitality, LLC. to Kim Fam Birmingham Sushi, Inc. with a new SDM Liquor License, Sunday Sales permit (AM and PM) and Outdoor Service area on public property to Kim Fam Birmingham Sushi, Inc. that will be located at 377 Hamilton Row, Birmingham, Oakland County, MI.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

12-293-23 Public Hearing to amend Article 4, Section 4.54 of the Zoning Ordinance to add flexibility to screening requirements for waste receptacles and ground-mounted mechanical/electrical equipment

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 8:38 p.m.

PD Dupuis presented the item.

Seeing no public comment, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 8:42 p.m.

Commissioners made the following comments in the course of discussion:

The Planning Board and Staff were to be thanked for their expertise and work on the item.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Host, seconded by Commissioner Haig:

To adopt an ordinance to amend Article 4, Section 4.54 of the Zoning Ordinance to add flexibility to screening requirements for waste receptacles and ground-mounted mechanical/electrical equipment.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

12-294-23 Public Hearing – Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 8:43 p.m.

PRM Laird introduced the item. Paul Urbiel and Jane Dixon of McKenna presented the item.

Seeing no public comment, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 9:10 p.m.

Staff and McKenna answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners made the following comments in the course of discussion:

- This Plan was modern, focused on inclusivity and sustainability, was a pleasure to read, and thorough. It was both aspirational and included strategic goals, and included flexibility in terms certain aspects and funding sources;
- The Parks and Recreation Board, DPS Staff, and McKenna team deserved to be commended for their work on the Plan;
- The recommended flexibility in funding sources was valuable;
- The Plan seemed to focus more heavily on parks than it did on the potential recreation aspect, including events;
- While residents may be satisfied with the City's present recreational offerings, if they were informed of other local municipalities' more robust recreational offerings they may be interested in a increase in recreational offerings as well;
- This Plan recognized that the City's parks attract people from the metro area, which is something to be embraced. When people visit Birmingham to access the parks, they also spend money in Birmingham, and it sets the City apart; and,
- The south well site was previously designated a park by the Commission, and was designated a commercial destination by the 2040 Plan, so this Plan should acknowledge the potential overlap and lack of conflict between the two uses at that site.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Host:

We have completed our public hearing for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the Commission suggests that references to the south well site minipark also include a notation that this site is identified as a potential commercial destination in the 2040 Plan.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

12-295-23 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Adoption

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Haig, seconded by Commissioner Longe: To adopt a resolution to approve the 2024-2028 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and further to direct the City Clerk to certify the resolution with signature.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

12-296-23 Citywide Wayfinding & Signage Master Plan

PD Dupuis presented the item. Staff and the Corbin design team (Corbin) answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners made the following comments in the course of discussion:

- This Plan could be seen as an exercise in branding as much as wayfinding. The kiosks may be somewhat anachronistic. It would be helpful to get a broad variety of public feedback on the proposals included in the Plan. Corbin should include all of the signage in town within its purview, including the signage in the parking decks, signage explaining how on-street parking works around town, the signage in the parks, and City Hall's address. A banner across Main Street to indicate upcoming events would be appropriate to add to this Plan. This Plan should not be approved presently; rather, the Committee should be encourage to continue its work and to return with an updated Plan;
- It was appropriate to have experts in the field make recommendations on best practices
 for wayfinding and branding. The golf courses should receive more wayfinding and
 signage. While technology can be helpful for wayfinding, out-of-town visitors and older
 residents would likely derive benefit from the kiosks. This Plan could be approved with the
 understanding that other work to create aligned wayfinding and signage in the City would
 occur in the future; and,
- Rescoping this project to have it include all signage within the City would be appropriate.
 The kiosks are likely to be beneficial, and including a QR code on the kiosks would expand

their usefulness. Soliciting some broad public feedback on the proposals could be appropriate. Approval of the concept of the Plan could occur, to provide guidelines for future wayfinding and signage projects in the City.

A number of Commissioners agreed that no private businesses should be featured on the wayfinding and signage, that the Haynes Square signage recommendations should be eliminated, that wayfinding and signage for the Rouge River should be included, that the Ad Hoc Committee should be made permanent for the purpose of reviewing wayfinding and signage projects within the City.

The Commission also commended the Committee and Corbin for their work on the Plan.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Haig, seconded by Commissioner Host: To adopt the concepts contained within Citywide Wayfinding and Signage Plan for the City of Birmingham.

Commissioner Schafer said this would be a great first step, that it should be expanded upon, that certain smaller aspects could be changed, and that creating a permanent Committee would be appropriate.

It was noted that this motion would allow City administration to proceed with initiating some of the projects recommended in the Plan.

Commissioner Host spoke in support of the Plan and in support of a permanent Committee being established.

Commissioner Baller commended the Committee.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Audit Presentation

FD Gerber introduced the item. Timothy St. Andrew and Philip Femminineo of Plante Moran presented the item. Staff and the Plante Moran team answered informational questions from the Commission.

It was noted that the Mayor would submit some updated information regarding the Cable Board.

12-297-23 Funding Agreement for the 48th District Court

CM Ecker and CA Kucharek presented the item and answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners made the following comments in the course of discussion:

- The City's payments to the Court have exceeded the City's revenues from the Court in 2023, and that has been the case in the last few years as well;
- If the City were to opt out of the 48th District Court funding agreement, the City would have to find a way to provide court services elsewhere. Despite the fact that the City currently invests more into the 48th District Court than it receives in revenues, the cost of funding a new court somewhere else would likely exceed that loss;
- While some of the subdivisions presently make a profit from the Court's operation, Birmingham does not. Given that no option on the table would substantially relieve this inequity, it would likely not benefit the City to continue pursuing relief of the inequity at this time. Option three would also not serve the City well. In looking at the average case load, Bloomfield Hills has a case load more similar to the subdivisions than to the funding units. Litigation against Bloomfield Hills would likely not be beneficial for that reason; and,
- This is a complex situation without a simple solution. CM Ecker has made progress in communicating with the other subdivisions and funding units, and it is possible that a more equitable situation could be achieved. The City must have court services available for its residents. Options one or two would be more appropriate than option three.

It was noted that the Commission could choose to combine options one and two for a two-part motion, if deemed appropriate.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Longe, seconded by MPT Schafer:

To adopt a resolution to continue to participate in the current funding agreement with Bloomfield Township and West Bloomfield Township;

AND

To adopt a resolution to approve an Addendum to the existing funding agreement with Bloomfield Township and W. Bloomfield Township and to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City, subject to the approval of the Political Subdivision Distribution / Funding Agreement by all four political subdivisions.

Commissioner Host said he would not support the motion, opining that the City needs to be fiscally responsible, that the situation was unfair, and that the 48th District Court needed to reduce its expenses.

Commissioner Long explained that the expenses of opting out of the current funding agreement would likely represent amounts in significant excess of the City's present loss in funding the 48th District Court. He noted that in addition, the costs to provide court services separately from the 48th District Court would also likely be in excess of that loss. He noted that this topic is reevaluated by the Commission annually and that the City could choose to proceed differently at the end of 2024 if no increase in equity is achieved through negotiations in the coming year. He observed that the Court is implementing electronic filing, which is likely to result in savings for the Court. Commissioner Long also noted that the City has increased its utilization of the Court's

services in an attempt to address noise on Woodward, and that it was prudent to proceed with the present motion for the Court's upcoming budget year as a result.

Commissioner Haig requested that the Court pursue financial support from the State for the Courtimplemented, State-mandated activities currently funded by the funding units.

Commissioner Longe noted that the motion regarded an agreement between municipal parties. She noted that the present motion could be passed, and that the Commission could then explore other potential options for relief from the County or State level as a further action.

Public Comment

Staff answered a question from a member of the public regarding the leadership of the other involved municipalities.

Mark Barron, resident of Birmingham and judge at the 48th District Court, made a number of comments regarding the preceding discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig

Nays, Commissioner Host

The Commission recessed briefly, and returned from recess.

Commission Items for Future Discussion

12-298-23 Adding Brandon to the Shirley-Arlington Improvement Project

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Baller, seconded by Commissioner Long: To include Brandon in the Shirley-Arlington improvement project.

Commissioner Host said this was a reasonable request.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

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Nays, None

Commission Discussion On Items From A Prior Meeting

Commissioner Baller thanked Staff for the reports on Bistro Compliance Staff Report and Sport Courts.

12-299-23 Closed Session Pursuant to MCL § 15.268 Sec. 8(e) of the Open Meetings Act

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Host:

To meet in closed session to discuss pending litigation pursuant to MCL § 15.268 Sec. 8(e) of the Open Meetings Act regarding John Reinhart, et al v City of Birmingham; U.S. District Court Case No.: 2:22-cv-11074-MAG-DRG, and The New 555 Commercial, LLC, The New 555 Residential, LLC, Manorwood Properties, LLC and Associates of 555, LP v City of Birmingham, State of Michigan Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs, Michigan Administrative Hearing System, Michigan Tax Tribunal Docket No.: 22-000772-TT, Property Nos.: 08-19-36-210-001, 08-19-36-210-003, and 08-19-36-210-005, which was appealed to the Michigan Court of Appeals bearing Docket 364563, and currently appealed to the Michigan Supreme Court bearing Docket No.: 165973.

AND

To meet in closed session to discuss pending litigation pursuant to MCL § 15.268 Sec. 8(e) of the Open Meetings Act regarding Caroline Ashleigh, et al v City of Birmingham, Oakland County Circuit Court Case No.: 23-202347-NZ.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

It was noted that the closed session would be entered into after all other agenda items were completed, and that action would be taken after the closed session.

The Commission went into closed session at 12:07 a.m.

The Commission returned from closed session at 12:34 a.m.

12-300-23 Action Subsequent to the Closed Session

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Host, seconded by Commissioner Long:

To direct the City Manager and the City Attorney to engage the services, based upon further due diligence, of an attorney the City has been speaking to from Plunkett Cooney, in regards to retaining their services to defend the City on a lawsuit from 13 residents against the City for sewer backup claims. The City Manager and City Attorney would speak with the attorney, Audrey

Forbush, on December 19, 2023 to gain more information. If the City Manager and City Attorney find that satisfactory, the City Manager and City Attorney will enter into an agreement to engage Plunkett Cooney's services. If the City Manager and City Attorney find the answers to the due diligence are not to their satisfaction, then the City Manager and City Attorney would return to the Commission at a later date with other suggestions.

The Mayor thanked Staff for their work.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Mayor McLain

Commissioner Longe

MPT Schafer

Commissioner Long Commissioner Baller Commissioner Haig Commissioner Host

Nays, None

VIII. REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Letter from Jim Mirro dated November 15, 2023

X. REPORTS

A. Commissioner Reports

The Mayor reported back from a phone call with State Senator McMorrow, meetings of the MML's Women in Government, the Woodward MDOT meeting with CM Ecker, and a meeting of the South Oakland County Mayor's Association.

MPT Schafer reported back from the first board meeting of Birmingham Youth Assistance.

B. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Haig sought clarification from Staff regarding the Open Meetings Act and individual Commissioner-resident conversations.

Staff provided clarification.

Commissioner Long described his interaction with an individual resident and his response to said interaction. He noted that, contrary to the Commissioner's verbally stated wishes, the resident left documentation in the Commissioner's mailbox after their interaction. The Commissioner explained that he subsequently provided the unopened documentation to the City Clerk. He explained that any conversations between an individual resident and an individual Commissioner regarding items that will come before the Commission should occur exclusively during an open meeting of the Commission. The Commissioner explained how correspondence could be

appropriately provided to the Commission. The Commissioner said that all Commissioners should be able to trust that their colleagues are behaving with these guidelines in mind, in order to preserve debate for open meetings and in order for the Commission to do its best work.

The Mayor said that Commissioners being approached by residents outside of open meetings to discuss matters before the Commission is a safety issue. She noted that Commission decisions need to occur within an open meeting, and that Commissioners need to avoid being lobbied regarding items that will be before the Commission.

Commissioner Longe noted that her home was visited by the same individual resident referenced by Commissioner Long, and stated that she declined meeting with the resident and receiving documentation from the resident. She explained that having an individual conversation with the resident could have created the public impression of unfairness. She noted that the Commission could have a publicly-noticed special meeting outside of City Hall, if deemed appropriate, where all interested parties could provide input.

Commissioner Long and Longe emphasized that Commissioners are required not only to avoid actual violations of their legal and ethical obligations, but also to avoid giving the potential impression of a violation of their legal and ethical obligations.

MPT Schafer noted that her home was visited twice by the same individual resident referenced by Commissioners Long and Longe, and stated that she did not interact with said resident.

Commissioner Host suggested that the Commission might find it appropriate to have a special meeting regarding the topic.

It was stated that Jim Mirro submitted a packet before the evening's Commission meeting, that the packet was provided to the City Clerk and the City Manager, and that both the packet and a separate letter from another resident regarding the Shirley-Arlington matter would be included in the Commission's next agenda packet.

It was noted that when such correspondence for the Commission is submitted to the City Clerk, it should be specified that the correspondence is for the Commission.

Commissioner Baller said there were lessons to be learned from this process, and that Commissioners could remain informed by watching the City's public meetings. He said he wanted the process to improve each time it occurs.

The Mayor said process, preparation, and training would create consistency.

- C. Advisory Boards, Committees, Commissions' Reports and Agendas
 - D. Legislation
 - E. City Staff

INFORMATION ONLY

XI. ADJOURN

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 12:37 a.m.

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist